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Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism

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> The two features which characterize great periods of upheaval are, one, that a new subject is born to respond to the objective pull of history by making freedom and reason the reality of the day. And two, a new relationship of theory and practice is forged...a viable philosophy must be capable of meeting the challenge of human experience, of the new revolts symbolic of the lack of specific freedoms.
>
> -- Raya Dunayevskaya, Marxism and Freedom[1]

I.

Of the many important figures in the development of the Scottish labour movement, the contributions of Harry McShane (1891-1988) are especially noteworthy. McShane's length of activity in the movement is in itself extraordinary, covering eight full decades in which he bequeathed a legacy of passionate dedication to the cause of workers' self-emancipation. His career as working class militant began as far back as 1908, when he participated in the mass demonstrations against unemployment in Glasgow, extended to his association with John MacLean as a member of the "Tramp Trust Unlimited" in the years following World War I, and continued in his work of organizing the unemployed and hunger marches of the 1920s and 1930s. Already known as one of the "last of the Red Clydesiders" by the time a New Left emerged in Britain in the mid-1950s, McShane remained a firmly committed activist who participated in an array of labour, civil rights, and anti-war activities from the 1950s right up until his death in 1988. His energy, devotion, and length of service to the cause of workers'

self-emancipation has earned him an important place in the annals of Scottish labour history.

Nevertheless, one of the most important dimensions of the life and work of Harry McShane remains largely unknown--his involvement in the effort to work out a restatement of the Humanist dimension of Marxism following his break with the Communist Party in the 1950s. Though his participation in a number of political activities from the 1950s to the 1980s is well-known, few have paid significant attention to McShane's commitment in those years to an open, critical Marxism centered on a humanist interpretation of Marx's works initiated by the American philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya.[2] Even fewer are aware of how McShane's commitment to Marxist-Humanism involved him in a unique effort to break out of the confining separation of worker from intellectual and theory from practice that has long characterized the radical movement. And yet as McShane never tired repeating, his "rebirth" (as he put it in a letter of 1980[3]) as a Marxist-Humanist in the late 1950s imparted a new dimension to his subsequent activities that gave his proletarian militancy new meaning.

This dimension of McShane's life and work has taken on particular importance in light of today's realities. The collapse of Communism and indeed of established Marxism as a whole in both East and West has clearly revealed the limitations of conventional approaches to Marxism. At the same time, these and other recent events have raised anew the question as to whether there remain still-undiscovered dimensions within the radical tradition which can assist the working out of alternative paths to liberation. Given this situation, Harry McShane's three-decade long involvement in an effort to

work out a new relation of theory to practice based on the humanist dimension of Marx's thought is well worth reexamining today.

An opportunity for achieving this is now provided with the recently-donated Archives collection, "The Harry McShane Collection, 1959-1988: Scottish Marxist-Humanism's Development in Dialogue with Raya Dunayevskaya." On deposit at The National Museum of Labour History in Manchester, this collection contains an array of writings by and about McShane, including 53 issues of The Scottish Marxist-Humanist, a journal edited by McShane from 1962-76, and some 200 pieces written by him for the American Marxist-Humanist paper News & Letters. The core of the Collection consists of 190 letters exchanged from 1959 to 1983 between McShane and Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. Virtually all of these letters are made available to the public for the first time. Because McShane's correspondence with Dunayevskaya contains a wealth of material illustrating the unique political-philosophic project that preoccupied him for the last three decades of his life, it will serve as the focus of our inquiry here.

II.

The road that took Harry McShane to Marxist-Humanism began in 1953, the year he decided to leave the Communist Party (CP) after a 31-year membership in it. This was a truly momentous year, marked as it was by such historic events as the death of Stalin and the first mass revolt against Communism, the East German workers' revolt of June 17, 1953. With characteristic modesty, in later years McShane refrained from linking his departure from

the CP to such momentous events, though they may well have had an impact. His actual resignation from the Party was precipitated by what he viewed as its bureaucratic expulsion of a group of youth who questioned the Party's political direction.

Upon breaking from the CP, McShane decided to return to work at the Glasgow shipyards, even though he was already 63 (previous to this he had been Scottish editor of the Daily Worker and a full-time organizer). Far from ending his political activity, his break with the CP opened up a new life for him. He decided not to join any existing political organization, but instead search for a new philosophy and a new organization with which to guide his activities. He became involved in a number of efforts to develop a new pole of anti-Stalinist opposition, such as the journal Revolt (which he edited along with Eric Heffer) and later the mimeographed New Commune. These, however, proved to be shortlived.[4] It was not until the late 1950s that he found what he was looking for when he came across a copy of Raya Dunayevskaya's Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today. It had a tremendous impact on him. As he wrote Dunayevskaya on June 17, 1961, "I have read nothing like it...I don't know of anyone who has handled [Marx] in the way it is done in the book."

Marxism and Freedom had a profound impact on McShane because of its focus on the importance of Marx's Humanism for the realities of the age of state-capitalism. As against those who considered nationalized property to be the pons asini of socialism, Dunayevskaya argued that nationalization of property which leaves the alienating relations of production untouched, as in Stalin's Russia, represents a form of state-capitalism. But Marxism and Freedom was more

than an economic analysis of the realities prevailing in Stalin's Russia; it above all focused on how the transformation of the Russian Revolution into a state-capitalist society provided new eyes for grasping Marx's neglected humanist dimension. Dunayevskaya thus closely examined Marx's now-famous Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (which she was the first to translate into English), where Marx critiqued not only private capitalism but also "vulgar Communism" for "completely negating the personality of man." Instead of placing property forms at the heart of the struggle for socialism, Marx, she argued, emphasized the need for new human relations rooted in the abolition of the division between mental and manual labor. In 1844 he thus defined his philosophy as "a thoroughgoing Naturalism or Humanism" which "distinguishes itself from both idealism and materialism and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both."[5] Instead of seeing this as a philosophic stage which Marx later outgrew, Dunayevskaya showed Humanism to be the red thread connecting all four decades of Marx's development, permeating especially the three volumes of his greatest theoretical work, Capital.

In one of his first letters to Dunayevskaya, McShane discusses the impact such ideas had upon him:

> When I left the CP I did not realize all the implications of that step. I still had some prejudices left while I was very bitter about the whole set-up of the CP. Then I received some folders from America refering to your book. When I read that there was a book setting Marxism against Communism I concluded that someone was turning Marx into a liberal. He had been described [this way] and at first I thought this was something of the same kind. Publicly, I had come out against the state-capitalist argument. I had fought with the Socialist Party of Great Britain and others who had used that argument....When your book came my way I was disturbed.

> My doubts became stronger and I went over all the material I had on Industrial Unionism and so on. I kept reading all I could get my hands on and finally, came to the conclusion that you were correct.

McShane's embrace of the ideas contained in Marxism and Freedom involved more than adherence to a particular interpretation of Marx's texts. It most of all involved him in an effort to return to Marx's Humanism by working out a new relation of theory to practice. The need to work out a new relation of theory to practice was in fact a central theme of Marxism and Freedom. On the one hand, it showed that the experience of the Russian Revolution, which abolished private property but became transformed into a totalitarian society under Stalin, illuminated in a new way the importance of Marx's emphasis on freeing the individual from the enslaving subordination to the division between mental and manual labour. At the same time, it singled out the quest for new human relations being voiced by such new revolts as the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the U.S., and the wildcat strikes against automation where workers asked "what kind of labor should man perform?" The objective and subjective realities of the age of state-capitalism, characterized, on the one hand, by counter-revolution arising from within revolution and, on the other, by the emergence of "new passions and new forces" aiming to reconstruct society on humanist foundations, gave new urgency to raising and working out "what happens after" the revolution before the actual seizure of power. Marxism and Freedom thus projected the need to work out a new unity between theory and practice, worker and intellectual, philosophy and action so as to assure that the "all-rounded human personality fit for a variety of labors" emerges in the very struggle against capitalism.

The effort to bring this to realization is the central thread connecting McShane's three-decade long dialogue and discussion with Dunayevskaya. It can be seen as early as 1959, when McShane declared his adherence to the Marxist-Humanist philosophy after meeting Dunayevskaya during her trip to England and Scotland in the Fall of that year. In a letter written to McShane shortly after that trip, Dunayevskaya focuses on how the formation of a Marxist-Humanist tendency on British soil hinges on breaking down the barrier between militant activism and working out theory:

> Great as it is to be against the "vanguardists," we cannot forever under the disguise of being against 'the party to lead' fail to accept the responsibility, the theoretical responsibility, for a restatement of Marxism for our age.[6]

From then on, Dunayevskaya encourages McShane to become a new type of activist, one who assumes responsibility for developing theory on the basis of his rich proletarian knowledge and experience. One of the most important expressions of this was her proposal, first raised early in 1960, that McShane write a Preface to an envisioned British edition of Marxism and Freedom. With characteristic modesty, McShane is at first wary of the suggestion. Dunayevskaya responds that his reluctance to write on theory is a holdover from the constraints of the old radical movement, which viewed the worker as fighter, as militant, or force for revolution, but not as thinker, as subject or Reason of revolution. As she puts it in a letter of November 11, 1960, "do not reject this idea as utterly utopian." His authorship of the Preface, she says,

> Will be a truly a red-letter day because it will show the worker as theoretician, and the Scottish as internationalist. That is to say, your experience, when it is united with a total view of Marxism for our age, is not a matter of merely factual data but the unfurling of an appeal, a challenge to intellectuals as well as of worker that, without the unity of theory and practice, we will be constantly moving into abstractions which will only serve the bourgeoisie, or incompleted revolutions of which we have too many. Do not be afraid to sound theoretical instead of "practical." On you it will look very, very good.

After some further back-and-forth, McShane drafts the Preface, at the end of 1960. As it turned out, his Preface was not to appear in print until 1971, as it took that long to secure a British edition of Marxism and Freedom. Yet one does not have to wait until then to witness the self-development that McShane experienced on account of his dialogue with Marxist-Humanism. The range of issues discussed between himself and Dunayevskaya in the 1960s include McShane's investigations into Scottish labour history (especially concerning the Calton weavers' revolt of 1787 and the contributions of Adam Fergusson to classical political economy); discussions on a host of issues within Marxist theory (especially the writings of the young Marx and the impact of Hegel's dialectic on Marx's Capital); and political reflections on an array of ongoing world events--from Mao's China to events in Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Dominican Republic and from the Cuban Revolution to the East European revolts. Starting in 1962 McShane also began publishing The Scottish Marxist-Humanist from Glasgow; it contained reports of ongoing battles on the shop floor, analyses of developments in the various Left political parties, explorations of revolutionary history, and theoretical articles on Marx and Marxism.

A major issue taken up by Dunayevskaya and McShane in this period is how to break with the old Left's hostility to philosophy. Again and again she poses the need (as she put it in a letter of June 12, 1961) to "conceive of thinking too as an activity." It is evident from the correspondence that she was concerned that the efforts to work out a new organizational alternative to established Marxism in Britain would not bear fruit if it lacked a solid philosophic foundation. She writes in 1961,

> Otherwise I fear that any contacts secured will see nothing new in your group and thus always be tempted into the "Party" or some larger group, and we'll repeat ad infinitum the same mistakes Trotskyism made when it thought that after World War II the revolutionary movement would just automatically go to "it." Nothing is ever as simple as all that, and one earns the stamp of historic continuity only if they have measured the new epoch not only with the immediate but the long range.

In a letter to Dunayevskaya of a year later (December 28, 1962), McShane speaks of his concerns over the lack of serious theoretic discussion in the movement, especially after having addressed two meetings of the "Young Socialist" group:

> It is useful work, but it has brought home to me the extent to which Marxist education has been neglected. As you may know, Clydeside was famous for its education classes from before the first world war until the late thirties. So far as the CP is concerned, education simply means popularizing Party policy with the workers. The Trotskyists are no different.

The emergence of a new generation of labour and anti-war activists in the 1960s was greeted warmly by McShane, who was repeatedly asked to speak at a growing number of teach-ins, demonstrations, and marches. Yet on a number of occasions their correspondence touches on whether the New Left is effecting a

sufficiently radical break with the old categories of established Marxism. In June 15, 1963 Dunayevskaya writes of how working out a genuine alternative to the old Left demands "starting with a total reorganization of one's own self, one's philosophic foundations." What clearly was of much concern to her was the continued attraction of Russian and/or Chinese Communism on the part of many of the young activists:

> The void in thought in the Marxist movement since the death of Lenin, has allowed the counter-revolution to establish itself as the claimant to the revolutionary heritage of Marxists....not only "Marxists" but the whole Left is once again missing up the revolutionary moment to establish a new polarizing force.

III.

The contradictions confronted by the New Left's effort to work out a new kind of revolutionary alternative moved Dunayevskaya by the mid-1960s to intensify her work on the book that was eventually to become Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao.[7] As against the prevailing attitude in the movement that "theory can be picked up en route,"[8] she insisted that the crisis-ridden nature of the times called for a confrontation with the Hegelian dialectic "in and for itself." Her challenge to the new generation of activists to directly grapple with Hegel's dialectic most certainly did not exclude McShane. As she wrote him on November 15, 1964 in the course of sending him a presentation on some of her preliminary thoughts on her work-in-progress,

> I really must get worker-revolutionaries who have not previously thought of philosophy involved in a dialogue on it, if even if is only to say they don't understand the philosophic categories because the manner in which

> they express their non-understanding is much more understanding than some intellectuals' glibness and it helps me a great deal.

McShane did not have an easy time responding to Dunayevskaya's request for a dialogue on the dialectic, as that was surely not what was expected of a worker-activist in the many tendencies he had been associated with in the radical movement. Dunayevskaya, however, nevertheless repeatedly asks for his thoughts on philosophic questions, arguing that working out a renewal of Marxist politics in the era of state-capitalism requires a much deeper grasp of dialectics than prevailed in the old radical movements. McShane responds by sending her several letters concerning what his own experience has taught him about the attitude of post-Marx Marxists to dialectics. He writes on March 13, 1966,

> Unfortunately, the British "Marxist" movement never showed much interest in philosophy. Most of them thought everything was explained by the quotation from the Communist Manifesto about history being a history of class struggles. They followed Engels in his Preface to Anti-Duhring and left it there. The discussion between Kautsky and Belfort Bax on the materialist concept of history failed to touch the philosophic roots of Marxism.

This does not mean, he says, that philosophic concerns were necessarily foreign to those growing up in pre-World War I Glasgow:

> I recall, when very young, I came into conflict with a Christian at a literary society of which I was a member. He was a follower of Hegel. After hearing him I wanted to know more about it but I was discouraged by the assertion that a profound knowledge of mathematics was necessary for anyone to understand Hegel.

Such interests got easily side-tracked in the face of the prevailing view in the labour movement that Marxism is solely

defined in terms of economic or political theory. As he says of Tom Mann in a letter of December 26, 1966, "I never knew him to say anything about philosophy. That was the weakness. I was always interested in it but the scope for discussion was very limited." He expanded upon this in an interview given a decade later (which is also available in the Archives Collection) in speaking of the concept of Marxism that even the greatest labour leaders were raised upon:

> What is wrong is that the version of Marxism which is preached concentrates mainly on economics. This is what I think is wrong. Of course Marx made a tremendous job in his analysis of capitalism, but what they've all forgotten, and what I think John MacLean forgot, was that Marx was first of all a philosopher.[9]

This concentration on viewing Marx's thought as a philosophy of liberation impinged directly on pressing political issues of the time, as can be seen from an exchange on racialism between McShane and Dunayevskaya in the late 1960s. In November 1967 Dunayevskaya wrote McShane that the devaluation of the pound "is a good opportunity to relate the problems of the proletariat in the advanced countries to those in the backward countries" as the economic crisis in Britain was sure to show itself in new manifestations of racism. Several months later, in response to the open emergence of racialism in Britain in the personage of Enoch Powell's anti-immigrant campaign, McShane wrote a brief analysis of the issue in The Scottish Marxist-Humanist. Dunayevskaya, however, took issue with the analysis, calling it "inadequate." She explained herself thusly in a letter of June 1, 1968:

> It is not enough to expose that the capitalists have always lived by the principle "divide and rule." We must tell the proletariat of the technologically developed world that the working people themselves must face the fact that they lived off those crumbs from the imperialist table that was so well set because imperialism lived off the fat of the land from the technologically underdeveloped countries. Marx showed that at the root of the freedom of wage labor was not only its own struggles for freedom, but also the fact that slavery still existed in Africa, in Asia, in the oppressed minorities within the developed country.

In contrasting racism and national chauvinism to the struggles of the Irish and the Black Dimension, she adds,

> The struggle for the minds of men is still the mightist weapon of all....it is all the more quintessential that the British proletariat rise up to its full height and pave a new road of world solidarity between themselves and all the "immigrants" of the world. The first step in that direction is the recognition of the fact that they have been repeating the reactionary ideas of their own exploiters.

McShane responded to Dunayevskaya's critique by publishing a special issue of The Scottish Marxist-Humanist devoted to the subject; it included both Dunayevskaya's letter to him on Enoch Powell and excerpts from American Civilization on Trial, a work mainly authored by Dunayevskaya which developed the concept of "Black Masses as Vanguard."[10] Their exchange on racialism touched directly on the connection between seemingly "abstract" questions of philosophy and concrete issues of social transformation. To Dunayevskaya the radical movement had made a grave error in considering Marxism to be simply a theory of class struggle, in that this tended to insensitize many activists to the struggles of non-proletarian forces, such as national minorities and women. Her own return to the philosophic roots of Marx's thought revealed

to her that Marx's Marxism is a philosophy of liberation rooted in opposition (as Marx put it in 1844) to all social relations in which "the human essence materializes itself in an inhuman manner in opposition to itself."[11] From the very birth of Marxist-Humanism, Dunayevskaya thus focused on the emergence of "new passions and new forces" in the freedom struggle--Blacks, women, youth, national minorities, rank-and-file workers opposing automation, etc. Viewing Marx's Marxism as a philosophy of liberation as against a mere theory of class struggle thus impinges on one's comprehension of how deep must be the uprooting of class society and how broad must be the view of the forces of liberation.

McShane himself was certainly no stranger to the importance of struggles for national liberation, as seen in his longstanding association with the Irish freedom struggles. In 1916 he had received a letter from James Connolly inviting him to come to Dublin to work with the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, but the crushing of the Easter uprising and Connolly's execution made it impossible. Five decades later, McShane remained active in support of the Irish struggle, speaking regularly in support of withdrawing British troops from Northern Ireland (on several occasions he shared the podium with Bernadette Devlin). He received a special invitation to attend the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Easter uprising in Dublin, about which he wrote the following to Dunayevskaya:

> The celebration has been taken over by the establishment. What a contrast between those in power and the men who fought in 1916! None of them see, or want to see, the international significance of the Easter uprising.

McShane's internationalism was also reflected in his activites on behalf of the workers' struggles in Eastern Europe, which he energetically supported throughout this period. In 1968 he co-authored, with Dunayevskaya, the Preface to Czechoslovakia: Revolution and Counter-Revolution, a collection of writings on the Prague Spring 1968 movement which included essays by Ivan Svitak and others.[12] In commenting on the ferment of ideas which characterized the Prague Spring movement, and which was so brutally cut short by Russian tanks, they wrote,

> Czechoslovakia's greatest achievement is that it began anew the working out of a relationship of theory and practice, philosophy and revolution, freedom and reality. What it was prevented from completing remains our task.

That task was spoken to directly by the publication, in 1973, of Dunayevskaya's Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao. Its exploration of "the dialectic proper" brought to a culmination over a decade of intense philosophic labour. McShane greeted the book upon its publication by writing,

> Philosophy and Revolution will be of tremendous value to those who have resisted the ideology of capitalism and intend to continue their efforts. There is a growing, but reluctant, acceptance of the possibility that there is something more than economics to Marxism. That concession is of no value if it fails to place revolution in the context of dialectical movement--with the live, active, self-determining human being moving ahead to change the world he created. Because of [Dunayevskaya's] understanding of both Hegel and Marx, she refuses to erect a fence between them....The author quotes the young Marx who charged Hegel with having "separated thinking from Subject," and as she puts it, "from the human being who thinks." Referring to the work of Marx in the field of political economy, Dunayevskaya has this to say: "The historic rationality Marx discovered as immanent in the hope of people meant, in turn, that it is living people who work

> out the meaning of philosophy by making the theory of liberation and the struggle to be free a unity....Man's true history does not begin until he is free, can develop all his innate talents, which class society, especially value-producing capitalism, throttles."

The effort to bring to life as a unit "the meaning of philosophy" and "the struggle to be free" led to an intense back-and-forth between the two concerning the relation between philosophy and organization. It centered on one of the most controversial parts of Philosophy and Revolution, Dunayevskaya's analysis of Lenin's "Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic" of 1914. She there discussed how Lenin's study of Hegel, initiated in the face of the collapse of established Marxism at the outbreak of World War I, represented a profound break with his own vulgar materialist past. Not long after finishing the book, she probed into why his reading of Hegel did not lead Lenin to break from his elitist concept of the "party to lead," even though it led him to change his views on a number of other questions. In a presentation to her colleagues in the U.S. of February, 1973 she probed into this in discussing the difference between Marx's concept of organization and that of Ferdinand Lassalle, whom Marx had called "a workers' dictator":

> Though Marxists were all supposed to be "for" Marx and opposed to Lassalle, the truth is that long before the Second International betrayed everyone acted on the Lassallean organizational ground....The "shocker" [is] that Lenin (and Rosa Luxemburg, despite all her talk of spontaneity) were Lassalleans, i.e., made a separation between philosophy and organization, had a "secret" feeling that, whereas Marx was right theoretically on all questions in the dispute between himself and Lassalle and was the founder of all of us, Lassalle was really the only organizer and "therefore" the organization as mediator between the masses and the new society must be learned from Lassalle.[13]

This presentation and the discussion around it made a tremendous impact on McShane. That the severity of Dunayevskaya's critique of Lenin startled him can be seen from his letter to her of March 4, 1973, in which he said "It is a good thing that we see falibility in the ablest of men. It is not easy for a person to dispose with all he once believed to be true." He then discusses the historic context which might explain the duality between dialectics and organization in figures such as Lenin:

> Having lived during the first World War period I recall [that] the steady development of the movement prevented one from giving thought to dialectics. Socialism was certain. Lenin lived in this period. It took a world war before the worship of the Second International came to an end. It looked as if all hopes were blasted. Lenin took a firm stand but he must have felt greatly disappointed....Let me ask, Raya, did Lenin have hopes that the Russian Social-Democracy would one day be able to operate in the same way as in West Europe? I think the attitude of Social-Democracy to dialectics deserves some attention.

On March 9, 1973 Dunayevskaya responds thusly:

> You have no idea how very excited I was to get your letter regarding Lenin and the whole concept of philosophy and organization....You really hit the nail on the nead (though your modesty made you put it in the form of a question) when you asked whether Lenin's perspective had been to copy the structure, not to mention the mass following, of the German Social-Democracy. That is it in a nutshell... Lenin's appreciation of theory regarding revolution did not carry through to organization, and by the time in 1914 when he first grasped the <u>universality</u> of the dialectic, that dialectic, when it comes to organization, had no ramifications....This dichotomy between philosophy and organization has kept us in a vise from which we better free ourselves. I do hope you will write more on your experiences in organizations and [their] gaping lack of philosophy.

As their correspondence continues, the separation of philosophy to organization in the history of Marxism is in turn related to

the problem of how to effect a renewal of Marxist thought in the contemporary period. This is seen in how Dunayevskaya asks McShane to grapple with the problem of separating philosophy from organization in his own political activities. She speaks of the "compulsion to make people realize that philosophy is not an intellectualist prescription, but the actual foundation for revolution" (Jan. 12, 1974). In response to several letters from McShane reporting on a growing number of invitations for him to speak at demonstrations and rallies, she emphasizes the importance to project Marxist-Humanism "as a body of ideas, [as] an organization." And she warns of "the danger of retrogression if we do not work out a new relationship of theory to practice" (April 21, 1974). From this back-and-forth we become witness to Dunayevskaya's repeated insistence on trangressing the barriers standing in the way of breaking free from the prevailing attitude that dialectics has little or no direct bearing on matters of activism or organization. As she wrote McShane on May 14, 1974,

> Because [of] your proletarian, revolutionary past and fluid expressiveness and length of devotion and integrality, everyone is ready to respect you and does. But that is not what is needed. If anything is to prove our Marxist-Humanist principles and originality of practice as well as principle, that the proletariat is not only muscle but Reason, it is that you compel them--all of them, Stalinists, Trotskyists, ILPers, Scotsmen of the Left, intellectuals as well as workers--to listen to you as philosopher who tells them: Your disdain for philosophy, elitism in declaring it 'abstruse,' is actually your fear of revolution as reality which needs the unity not only of theory and practice "in general" but specifically as rooted in dialectics; there is no separation between dialectics in philosophy and that in revolution; liberation that will not be transformed into its opposite, or be aborted before it ever happens, demands that unity which is its truth, its only truth, and [you] are here to explain

> it all both theoretically and from a lifetime of experience none of [them] can match. That is the heritage you must bequeath to us <u>every day</u> of life.

An especially striking illustration of McShane's effort to enter into such projection during this period is reflected in his participation in a major conference on the work of Adam Smith, which featured such figures as John Kenneth Galbraith, Arthur Burns, and Lord Boyle as speakers. In a letter of June 4, 1973, written prior to the event, McShane informs Dunayevskaya of his intent to take the floor at the Conference, even though he was not a scheduled speaker: "I want your advice, but I feel, at the moment that the philosophic basis of Marx's criticism should be emphasized." Dunayevskaya responds on May 7, 1973 with a lengthy letter on the impact of Smith's work on the development of Hegel's thought"

> I am anxious that when you appear with such a super-class as the Scotsman-turned-American, Galbraith, <u>you are</u> Reason, not he or they. I trust you will not be self-conscious about talking of Hegel and the dialectic.

Though McShane did not get to speak on Hegel at the Conference, he did end up taking the floor. It caused such a sensation that it was reported on by several newspapers, including the <u>Times</u>. McShane relates the experience in a letter of June 4, 1973,

> Lord Boyle set out to debunk Marx by attacking the labour theory of value. He talked the old rubbish about skilled workers producing more value than unskilled labour. He thought he was boosting Smith. I made the only speech from the floor. I said that to dispose of the labour theory of value was to reject Smith as well as Marx, so where does that leave you? I was astounded by the effect. Galbrieth said he agreed fully with me and added, 'it takes a Scotsman to expound Marxism.'

IV.

In the late 1970s Dunayevskaya embarked on a new theoretic project, her work on the book that became (by 1982) Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution. During this same period, McShane continued to be politically active, both in the Glasgow Trades Council and in speaking at a considerable number of marches, teach-ins, and rallies, even though he was now approaching 90. Though McShane'e letters to Dunayevskaya tend to be less lengthy and frequent in the last years of his life, the back-and-forth between them continues. Indeed, some of the most novel concepts developed by Dunayevskaya in the last decade of her life were first articulated in letters to McShane.

One of the most outstanding expressions of this is a letter of June 30, 1978, which proved of pivotal importance in the development of Dunayevskaya's book on Rosa Luxemburg. She begins the letter by saying,

> I would like to have a little theoretical discussion with you on the difference between theory and philosophy, and on the difference between a "leader" and a founder....I wish to go as far back as the founder of all of us, Engels and Lenin included. Note, I include Engels of Marx's own time and place him alongside Lenin or anyone post-Marx because it is most decisive to realize Marxism is Marx's new continent of thought and only of Marx, not Marx and Engels. [emphasis in original]

What follows is a discussion of how despite his loyalty to Marx, Engels failed to grasp the depth of Marx's challenge to all forms of human development which bear the mark of class society. In anticipation of her later discussion of the difference between

Marx's Ethnological Notebooks (1880-81) and Engels' Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (1884) in her Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, she notes that Engels tended to glorify "primitive communism" whereas Marx "showed that even in communal society there was 'slavery'--slavery of women." By "touting to the skies how great women were before [the existence of] private property," Engels failed to grasp the depth of Marx's vision of a total revolution against all forms of dehumanized social existence. She writes,

> Marx's profound insight has nothing to do with anthropology or technology. No, the point was that somewhere in 'pre-history' of humanity the division between mental and manual labour, necessary or otherwise, produced the breakup of the total being and its "reunification" would first end [alienating relations of] Man/Woman in pre-history and start a new humanity. So, both revolution and totality as new beginnings would start not just a new continent of thought but a new kind of person. Now, let us get down to our age and see how difficult it is to grasp that [concept of] "Absolute Idea as New Beginning."[14]

Dunayevskaya was later to show that Engels' failure to grasp the depth of Marx's concept of revolution set the ground for all of post-Marx Marxism. It led her, by 1982, to create a new category, "post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels, as pejorative," in her Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.[15] With the creation of that category, her projection of the need for a profound reorganization of thought and action in the radical movement only deepened. As she often noted, "we were all raised as Engelsians"; yet the realities of our age, she argued, signified that Marxism had a future only if it broke decisively from the Engelsian heritage. The fact that she repeatedly

broached this challenge to Harry McShane, who by this time was already in his 90s, says something about her confidence in the ability of masses of people to achieve this.

McShane responded to her work on this subject as follows, in his letter of July 14, 1978:

> The concentration on "strategy" excludes philosophy and also research of any kind. It has become habit for women just to fit in. Looking back, that has always been practiced in the "Marxist" parties. Women played a more important role in the reformist ILP. Male chauvinism only allowed an occasional women orator to play a part--but even then she fitted in....The truth is that emancipation is seen only as a void; what it means for <u>both</u> sexes is not seen.

In another letter (of December 10, 1978) he refers to an essay of Dunayevskaya's contrasing Marx to Engels as "an amazing article which places me and many others, miles behind," and reports sending a copy of it to Sheila Rowbotham.

Dunayevskaya's critique of post-Marx Marxism in turn led to further dialogue between them on the relation of philosophy and organization, which they had both discussed following the completion of <u>Philosophy and Revolution</u>. On June 17, 1980, she writes McShane,

> The topics on which I'm most interested in hearing from you are not so much all the theoretic contributions we have made in bringing Marxist-Humanism onto the historic stage, but the question of organization. This is one topic I've had no help at all on, not even from Lenin....Lenin did not make as great a break with his organizational past as with his philosophic past...there is no worked out methodology as to what that little word, "dialectics," would mean in the dialectics of the party.

She then proceeds to critique not only the elitist vanguard

party concept but also those who presume that the spontaneous forms of organization by themselves "answer" the problem of organization:

> There is nothing abstract about philosophy because its generalizations are historic and poses--it only poses, it cannot be the organization--so new a relationship of theory to practice and practice to theory, that there must be a new form of organization. Committee form is good both in its correspondence to what comes from the masses themselves and [in its] non-ridigity [compared to] "the Party form." But it, too, is not fully adequate because so much time had to be spent on making the leadership listen to the masses that self-development of ideas was very nearly subordinated to the self-development of the individuals in the committees....I'm very anxious to find out from you what you have thought about organization ever since you broke with Stalinism.

Dunayevskaya's request for assistance in digging into what she later was to call an "untrodden path" in the whole of post-Marx Marxism--the relation of dialectics and organization[16]--is one that McShane responded to with characteristic modesty, writing in a letter of July 6, 1980, "You say that on the issue of organization you get no help from Lenin and then you ask me some questions about it. Please excuse my terrible sense of humour." But this hardly means he kept silent on the question. On several occasions he speaks of the great difficulty in breaking free from the post-Marx Marxist separation of philosophy from organization, especially when recalling the lessons of his own past:

> It is often asked why some, including me, remained in the Communist Party so long. I would say that the importance attached to the Party by Lenin's What is to be Done has something to do with it. The leaders admitted more and more mistakes as the years went on. They dropped one mistake to make room for another. But the Party seemed indispensible to the revolution. As time went on the

> Party became, to some, of greater importance than the revolution....I knew a little different, but I attached importance to the Party.

McShane's comment speaks to a major concern of Dunayevskaya as she labored in the last year of her life on a planned book on "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born out of Spontaneity."[17] In the last weeks of her life, she probed into why so many new organizations born from spontaneous freedom struggles ended up being swallowed up by the old, elitist forms of organization. She asked,

> What have the various forms of spontaneity achieved? And <u>why</u>, when they did come close to power, was it the political organizations that didn't take them over so much, as that they themselves <u>looked to be taken over</u>.[18]

The question is not at all unrelated to the political development of Harry McShane. He was a participant in a most creative mass movement during the Red Clyde revolt after World War I, one that certainly gave rise to spontaneous mass organizations in which he was most active. What then explains the lure of "the Party" upon so many militant activists of that and later generations? In part, the answer may lie in the fact the masses also search for an organization different from their own insofar as they hunger for an organization based not just on resolving the immediate issues of the day but also committed to creating a new society.

The quest for theory, for an organization that can help provide the "long range" view, may thus help explain the attractive lure of "the Party." And yet as McShane discovered, "the Party" has all too often ended up stifling the movement for liberation in falling prey to a narrow dogmatism. The question then becomes, how to create a form of organization that speaks to the hunger for theory arising from below without falling into pitfalls of the elitist "party to lead? It was directly addressed by Dunayevskaya in her letter of June 17, 1980, when she asked McShane,

> Why haven't we been able, in rejecting the party-to-lead that so misled, to work out some organizational form that would attract, I mean, have a pull on the masses and the intellectuals that party-to-lead had?

The struggle to overcome the barriers standing in the way of the creation of such a new form of organizational underlines Dunayevskaya's repeated insistence that McShane project himself not only as a militant activist but also as a theoretician. This challenge becomes even more sharply projected following the development of her concept of "post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels, as pejorative." As she wrote to McShane on August 15, 1983 in response to a letter from him commenting on the shortcomings of the various British Marxist tendencies,

> History just didn't seem to move anywhere for them, and yet these people never tire of repeating 'class struggle, class struggle' without once seeing the Reason that issues from that class struggle--that remains for them in the hands of theoreticians who [are] lacking both Subject and Dialectics....I can't seem to get away from the imperativeness of philosophy, especially now when...we have issued this challenge to post-Marx Marxists.

Though McShane was in declining health in this period, he continued he send Dunayevskaya his views on a number of topics. One of his last letters focused on what Marxist-Humanism had meant to him:

> I have, once again, emerged from the hospital. It was a near thing. I did not expect to reach it. I emerged in time to hear Mrs. Thatcher's attempt to denigrate Marxism. I am glad I heard it. It was what I needed. She wants the people of Britain to believe that Marxist thought must emanate from Russia. Like some badly informed "believers" in Marx she seems unaware of the fact that, many years ago, the leaders of Russia turned their backs on Marxism. She imagines that when she denounces Russia she is damaging the force that stands opposed to capitalist oppression. Her aim is to place all the existing institutions of government at the service of all who have succeeded in the present system of exploitation, It is not possible for her, dreaming as she does of solving all problems by bombastic speeches, to visualize the desire for revolutionary change coming from the victims of the policy of oppression which she represents.

He then adds, in a moving recollection of his years as a Marxist-Humanist,

> I am in good spirits. We must challenge our enemies into the open and confront them with the arsenal of Marxist-Humanism. I have been reliving the period when my teacher from Detroit came to Glasgow. My memory goes back to when Raya corrected my acceptance of what Lenin had said about the three departments of Marxist theory.[19] It did not take long for me to accept Marxism and Freedom as the indispensable follow-up to Volume One of Capital. Please let me conclude by saying that I will do better for our cause than I have been capable of doing for a long time.

V.

The McShane-Dunayevskaya correspondence represents a rich vantage point from which to view a unique effort to work out a new beginning in revolutionary theory and practice. The effort

to work out a new beginning certainly characterized McShane, as seen in his decision, following his break from the Communist Party, to "begin life anew" (at age 68!) by aligning himself with a new philosophy, Marxist-Humanism. And the effort to work out a new beginning certainly characterized Dunayavskaya's correspondence with McShane, as seen in her effort to break down the confining separation between worker and intellectual by developing an active interchange of views with him over the course of some three decades. As against the situation that the radical movement found itself in during the post-World War II period, their correspondence reflects an active effort to embark upon a new path by working out the integrality of a philosophy of liberation with revolutionary action.

This hardly means that the new kind of relationship between theory and practice, worker and intellectual, and philosophy and organization which their correspondence reached to create achieved realization in the post-World War II era. Dunayevskaya's ideas did not win wide acceptance in the Marxist movement during her lifetime,[20] and McShane's effort to create a Marxist-Humanist presence in Britain was accepted by a relatively small number of people. The spirit of their correspondence--an effort to create "the new kind of person" by breaking down the separation of mental and manual which Marx made central to his vision of the new society--certainly remained unfinished at the time of their respective deaths (Dunayevskaya died in 1987, McShane a year later). Yet the unfinished nature of the unique project they were part of hardly justifies ignoring McShane's Marxist-Humanist dimension. If it is true, as one historian of the Scottish labour movement

put it,[21] that "nothing is ever lost" in the labour movement, even the most forgotten and "defeated," insofar as a contribution to liberation in one age can always speak to another generation, how much truer is this when it concerns something as critical as the working out of so new a relationship between worker and intellectual?

Though the McShane-Dunayevskaya dialogue on the dialectic ended in the 1980s, there is no reason it should come to an end for us. For in the years since their deaths, the need to work out a philosophic new beginning rooted in the new kind of unity of theory and practice they struggled to make real has taken on the greatest of urgency. The long-overdue of collapse of the state-capitalist regimes that called themselves Communist in Russia and East Europe has exposed the bankruptcy of reducing "socialism" to the mere nationalization of private property while leaving the fragmentation of the human personality intact. Far from being restricted to Russia or East Europe, the <u>non-viability</u> of any concept of socialism that stops short of the creation of new human relations has been made plainly evident on a <u>world</u> scale. Though many who yesterday clung to a truncated Marxism conclude from this that "Marxism is dead" today, the real question is whether the radical movement can work out a philosophic new beginning on the basis of the <u>transcendence</u> of the legacy of "post-Marx Marxism as pejorative." Precisely because the three-decade long correspondence between Dunayevskaya and McShane was part of a struggle achieve such a transcendence, it speaks volumes to the whole question of "how to begin anew" today.

At the very least, the availability of "The Harry McShane Collection: Scottish Marxist-Humanism in Dialogue with Raya Dunayevskaya" at the National Labour Museum in Manchester will allow a new generation of scholars and activists to get to know Harry McShane as he really was. Far too many have acted as if his life ended in 1953; others perhaps act as if it ended in 1922. And others who do acknowledge his break with the Communists either downplay or ignore his relationship to Marxist-Humanism. McShane himself, however, often expressed irritation at those who complimented him for his "militancy" and "commitment" but ignored his ideas. He made it quite clear that it was Marxist-Humanism that changed his life and gave meaning to his activities in the years after 1959. As he wrote in 1966,

> We suffered for a long time from the fact that we found it difficult to shake off the "Communist" way of seeing things. Had it not been for the fact that I had been 13 years in the movement before I joined the CP, in 1922, I might never have made it. I certainly would not have made it had it not been for Marxism and Freedom.

As he wrote on another occasion,

> I floundered about until I was in touch with Raya and Marxism and Freedom. The only thing that worries me about dying is the fear that I will not have made up for lost time.

It is remarkable indeed to encounter someone who at the age of 68 decides, after reading Marxism and Freedom, to break from what he knew to be "Marxism" and become a participant in working out a new philosophic beginning. In the years that followed Marxism and Freedom, Dunayevskaya's development of the body of ideas of

Marxist-Humanism grew massively in scope and depth. Now that this too can be studied in full,[22], the door is open for a new generation to work out their own dialogue on the dialectic. If it leads us to working out a new philosophic beginning, on the level of the realities of our age, of the kind which Harry McShane reached for upon discovering Marxism and Freedom in the late 1950s, we will have done much to live up to the legacy he bequeathed to us.

The availability of "The Harry McShane Collection" thus provides an important vantage point from which to view a unique effort to break from attitudes which take the separation of mental and manual, theory and practice, worker and intellectual as given. At a moment when powerful ideological forces are using the much heralded "death of Marxism" to convince all that the status quo represents humanity's future, the record of Harry McShane's lifelong struggle for a new, human society that would end the separation between mental and manual labour becomes all the more compelling. As he said in 1971,

> I have changed considerably in recent years, developed my thought. I believe we now have to look further than the traditional socialist movement. We must not seek merely personal property or equality. We must open the gates to a higher development of man, we must clear away the shackles that have prevented that development. This is what has not been sufficiently emphasized in the socialist movement.23

Notes

1. Raya Dunayevskaya, Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 17. This fourth expanded edition of the book contains as a new Introduction Dunayevskaya's overview of Marxist-Humanism, entitled "Dialectics of Revolution: American Roots and Marx's World Humanist Concepts."

2. The fact that McShane's Marxist-Humanist dimension remains relatively unknown also owes much to No Mean Fighter (London, Pluto Press, 1977) his "autobiography" (edited by Joan Smith) which contains only a very brief discussion of his activities in the years after 1953. For McShane's critique of Smith's editing of the book, see his letter September 5, 1974 in "The Harry McShane Collection": "I am not writing an autobiography. Over a long period Joan Smith brought a tape-recorder every Tuesday afternoon. I took it that the purpose was to get a record of events. I refuse no one. It was later that I discovered that the material was to be used by Pluto Press for an autobiography. I have opposed this but have suggested that Joan Smith use it as a biography under her own name. I have not written a word." See also his letter of July 1, 1978: "I did not even see the proofs of the book before it was finished. Joan Smith sent me some chapters for revision...when it was recorded, five years ago, I did not think it would ever come out....The decision to put it out in its present form and with my name as joint author was not mine."

3. See McShane's letter to Dunayevskaya of April 16, 1980: "Since [1917] we have been enriched by all the new material by the hand of Marx that has come to light. That has all been given meaning by your work. You have done a tremendous job....You have made it possible for many of us to become re-born Marxists. For that we should all be thankful."

4. Copies of Revolt and The New Commune can also be found in "The Harry McShane Collection" at the National Labour Museum in Manchester.

5. Karl Marx, "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole" in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, in Karl Marx, Collected Works, Vol. III (New York: International Press, 1975), p. 336. Dunayevskaya published the first English translation of this essay as appendix A to the 1958 edition of Marxism and Freedom.

6. This undated letter was written by Dunayevskaya sometime in December, 1960. "The Harry McShane Collection" contains 190 letters exchanged between Dunayevskaya and McShane; a smaller number of letters, which deal mainly with routine organizational matters, have not been deposited in the Collection.

7. Raya Dunayevskaya, Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao (New York, Columbia University Press, 1989). For the decade-long process of philosophic development that led to Philosophy and Revolution, see the supplementary vol. 14 to The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection--Marxist-Humanism: a Half Century of its World Development, available on microfilm from Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Detroit Michigan. The documents covering the development of Philosophy and Revolution amount to about 2,000 pages.

8. The phrase "picking up theory en route" was popularized by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, a leader of the French student movement of 1968, in his Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968).

9. See "Interview with Harry McShane" in An Phoblacht, contained in "The Harry McShane Collection." See also his "Comments on News and Letters [Committees] Perspectives Thesis" of July 7, 1975, also contained in the Collection, where he likewise discusses MacLean: "He was outstanding on Marxist economics. He was, as was Lenin, a follower of Plekhanov and quoted [Ernest] Haeckel--not Hegel. Like most of us he had faith in the Social-Democratic Party."

10. See American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard, a Statement of the National Editorial Board, News and Letters Committees (Detroit: News and Letters, 1983).

11. Karl Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole," op. cit., p. 331.

12. See Czechoslovakia: Revolution and Counter-Revolution (Detroit: News and Letters, 1968). McShane's draft foreword as well as the published foreword are available in "The Harry McShane Collection."

13. This statement was made in a Presentation by Dunayevskaya to the Resident Editorial Board of News and Letters Committees on February 13, 1973. McShane was responding to the minutes of the Presentation. See "Philosophy and Revolution as Organization Builder," in The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Vol. 7, microfilm no. 4982.

14. Dunayevskaya considered the concept "Absolute Idea as New Beginning," which serves as the subject matter of chapter 1 of Philosophy and Revolution, to be her unique contribution to Marxism. For a further elaboration of this concept, see Raya Dunayevskaya, "Hegel's Absolutes as New Beginning," in Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy, ed. by Warren E. Steinkraus and Kanneth L. Schmitz (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980), pp. 163-78.

I

T/SOR/50/4

THIS LAST FAREWELL TO HARRY
M'SHANE SHOULD NOT MAKE US FEEL
SAD AND GLOOMY. ~~WORKED WITH HIM~~
~~FOR OVER 40 YEARS~~
BUT TO THOSE OF US WHO HAVE
GATHERED HERE TODAY AND KNEW
THIS RATHER SPECIAL MAN WE SHOULD
FEEL PRIVILEDGED & HEARTENED AND
MAY I SAY INSPIRED BY HIS LIFE
AND WORK

PESSIMISM, DOUBT AND WAVERING
WAS NEVER PART OF HIS MAKE UP
HIS WATCHWORD WAS HOPE AND
CONFIDENCE IN THE WORKING CLASS
HIS LODE STAR & GUIDE WAS THE
TEACHINGS OF MARX & ENGELS

McShane resigna blow to Reds in Britain

By DOUGLAS MALONE,
Our Industrial Correspondent

COMMUNIST Party strength in Scotland, and the whole fabric of the national organisation in Britain, has been dealt a serious blow by the resignation of Mr Harry McShane, a leading member for over 30 years.

His action, revealed today, follows a breakdown in party organisation in Glasgow, and a widespread dissatisfaction with leadership, which may eventually cause the complete collapse of the organisation in the city.

Numerous members in Glasgow, and in other parts of Scotland, are in sympathy with the motives which prompted Mr McShane's decision to divorce himself completely from the party after a lifetime of service.

"TROTSKYIST CLIQUE"

Already, within recent weeks, several members of the party have been suspended for criticising the leadership and for expressing themselves as unwilling to work under a "Trotskyist clique" which has been adopting "secret police methods."

These members and McShane have been reported for not "toeing the line" and for making flippant remarks about the British leader—Mr Harry Pollitt.

Generally, however, they have been expressing themselves as dissatisfied with the policy of their leaders of pushing young members into the background, while keeping themselves in the limelight.

This is significant in view of the statement issued in Moscow yesterday that the "cult of individuals" will not only be condemned but "eradicated."

TROUBLE BREWING

The present disharmony, culminating in McShane's resignation today, is not new. Since 1948 trouble has been brewing because of the action of the Scottish Party leaders in sacking their Gorbals Committee after the refusal of McShane to stand as a candidate in the local by-election.

It was at this time that the committee, under McShane's chairmanship, openly expressed their views on the party leadership for the first time.

In a typical Moscow manner, the national leaders took the easy way out. No investigation was held into the charges made—the committee was simply replaced by members from outside the

...three of the original ...rs have resigned

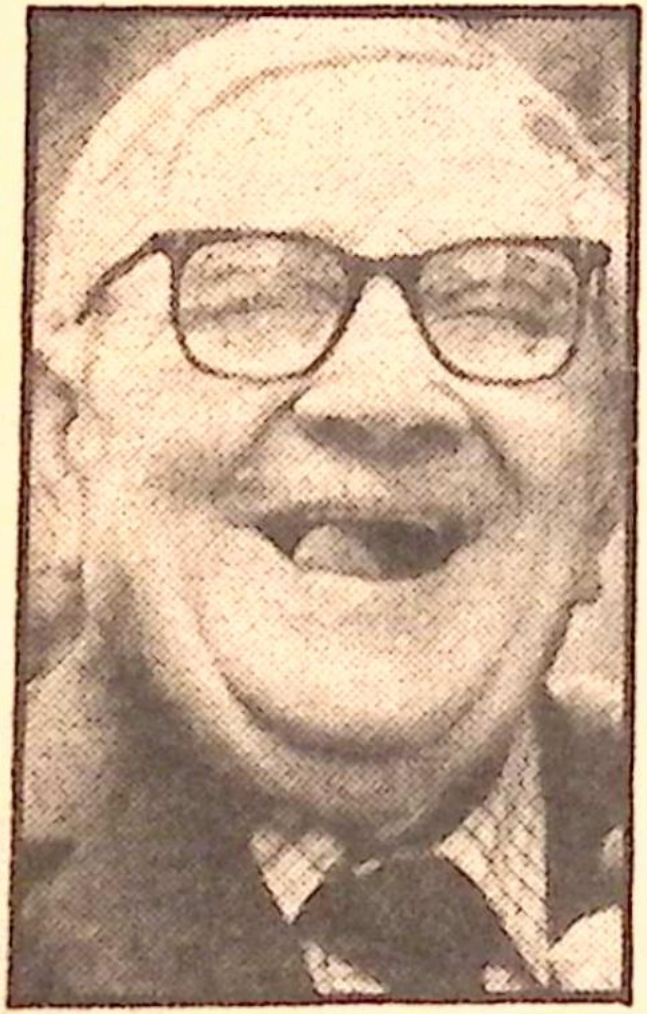
marches and in demonstrations held during the depression years.

In resigning from the party his one desire is to make it known that he has done so because he disapproves of party policy and not for personal gain.

His motive in making public his action is to contradict "trumped up" charges that he and the other members in dispute have been discussing party affairs outside the movement and discussing secret documents with outsiders.

HARRY McSHANE

HARRY'S TALK-IN



HARRY McSHANE

HARRY McSHANE, the last of the Red Clydesiders, is giving a lecture at Strathclyde University on Tuesday of next week.

That is the day before his 96th birthday.

Harry's theme will be the historical significance of May Day and Arthur McIvor, a lecturer in history at Strathclyde, told me: "Harry's confined to a wheelchair now and I think that he'll talk for only about 10 minutes.

"Then it will be a question and answer which he prefers. He now lives in a nursing home at Great Western Road and two of the members of the Glasgow Labour History Workshop who know him well have arranged to bring him here."

There will also be a real rarity at the meeting — a film of the 1938 May Day march through Glasgow when the theme was The Challenge to Fascism.

Mr McIvor said: "I haven't seen it yet myself. It's in the Scottish Film Archive

Ian Buchan

VOICE of the Times

An end to loneliness

DOWN Clydebank way the price of happiness doesn't come expensive - it costs 50p for a whole year of it.

It's just one of the scores of heart-warming stories we discovered when, with the help of Strathclyde Region, we launched the Caring Cup Competition to honour organisations tackling hypothermia among the old.

It's worth telling, because it is a shining example of how a group of lively pensioners, completely on their own initiative, set out to rekindle that old, caring tenement feeling which used to be the hallmark of West of Scotland living, and was lost when the high flats came along.

In a multi-storey block in Drumry the old folk were fed up. Their lives were made a misery because the lifts were constantly breaking down. People unable to tackle the long climb upstairs were trapped in their homes.

So they formed themselves into the North Drumry Pensioners' Action Group to do something about it. When canvassing every flat, organisers discovered that the biggest problem on their doorstep wasn't the lifts: it was loneliness.

There was no-one to have a blether and a cup of tea with.

Without knowing anything about urban aid or grants, they set about remedying things. The result: A ground-floor flat was transformed into a day centre. Five days a week, and for 50p a year, pensioners meet for a chat, a tea and other activities.

It's the busiest flat in the building and has banished loneliness. Which is why today we salute the winners of our Caring Cup. And all the other public-spirited organisations bringing happiness into the lives of others.

The last rebel

WITH the death of Harry McShane, the last of the Red Clydesiders, a link with Scotland's past is broken. His life was a long and full one - and this country was enriched by its presence. He was a rebel who always had a truly noble cause.

BINGO NOS: READER SERVICE

While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of the lines, the Evening Times cannot be responsible for any errors.

THE SUN

Game 361, Day 4 — 89, 53, 28, 65, 74, 49, 43, 76, 70, 20, 84.Lotto numbers — 4, 10, 24, 28, 40, 41, 49.

DAILY RECORD

Game 31 — 18, 3, 71, 25, 89, 29, 40, 66, 14.

THE STAR

Game 10, Day 4 — 75, 26, 87, 66, 1, 38, 6, 82, 4, 20. Lucky Nos. Car winner: T422301. £5000 — X234779, A377936.£1000 — R358067, E342050, X265909, M463524, W293004.£500 — D233381, A309332, F212795, E319670, M388122. £100 — U474171, E407101, M476544, K713822, A303350, K444181, E373011, V177644, W305479, T428094, M474829, R275022, F400666, S153654, D314732.

DAILY MIRROR

Game 13, Day 5 — 41, 54, 79, 36, 63, 12, 25, 59, 75, 44, 10, 88, 72.

The resignation from the party of Mr Harry McShane is an indication of how intolerable its "discipline" has become. For more than 30 years he has been leader of the movement in Scotland. He has built the not inconsiderable structure here from its foundation. But now he has had enough.

Recently some Scottish Communists have dared to criticise leaders whose "secret police methods" have at last become so distasteful that they could be borne no longer. They have made flippant remarks about Mr Harry Pollitt, the British leader — the unforgivable sin. Communism and a sense of humour cannot exist together.

So the ruthless red axe has fallen; they have been suspended. And Mr McShane has decided to go with them. Moscow announced yesterday that the "cult of individuals" within the party was not only to be condemned but would be "eradicated." Here in Scotland we have proof that, in one instance at least, the Kremlin means what it says.

This is not the first indication that Communism in Scotland is crumbling. The process has been going on for a number of years. Mr McShane's resignation will hasten it.

No one in his right mind will regret the disruption in our midst of an alien tyranny which, when it is understood, is utterly abhorrent to every individual who prefers to think for himself.

Clyde rebel with a cause

The last of the Red Clydesiders Harry McShane has died, just three weeks short of his 97th birthday.

And today tributes poured in for the man described as "the champion of the ordinary working man."

STUC general secretary Campbell Christie described him as " a rebel, a character and an important part of the Red history of Glasgow."

HOME

A lifelong Marxist, the man who led the famous hunger marches of the thirties spent the last few years of his life in a Church of Scotland eventide home in Great Western Road, Glasgow.

An Irish Catholic, McShane was born in Glasgow in 1891 and was brought up by his grandparents.

He was drawn into political activity in his late teens and began his political career in the old Independent Labour Party in 1908 while he was an engineer in the Clydeside shipyards.

TANKS

He broke with the ILP and joined the fledgling British Socialist Party, but later followed fellow Red Clydesider John Maclean into the Communist Party, where he stayed until 1953.

During his long life, he took part in the workers' revolt that saw tanks in George Square and was jailed three times for organising protests and rent strikes.

Actor Russell Hunter later received much acclaim for his part in the BBC Scotland TV play The Dunroamin' Rising, about the former Red Clydesider's hunger strike in the old folks' home.